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tures was never wholly lost, that agriculture fared far worse, and that commerce was prostrated.

It seems to the reviewer that, important as the book is to economic history, in its very strength lies a weakness, for in concentrating his attention upon the privations and distress of the times, the author narrowly escapes the point of view of a contemporary federalist. And one looks in vain among federalists — save perhaps in the case of the Adamses, father and son, whose federalism was becoming open to question — for a fair recognition that Jefferson had but little choice beyond embargo or war. Therefore, the hardships due to the embargo fail to give the entire picture. The spirit in which Jefferson embarked upon his policy and the loyalty with which many Americans sustained it are also important. For the embargo was Jefferson's grand experiment in the laboratory of world peace; hence his solicitude to give it a trial to the utmost regardless even of its effect upon his own popularity, which Jefferson viewed as the dearest prize of a long career. But it is possibly unfair to demand an interpretation of the embargo favorable to Jefferson from an author who has chosen to emphasize its material aspects and who has performed his task so thoroughly. *The American embargo, 1807-1809*, is authoritative in its own field and is creditable to its author and to the series in which it appears.

LOUIS MARTIN SEARS

The age of invention. A chronicle of mechanical conquest. By Holland Thompson. [The chronicles of America. Edited by Allen Johnson under the supervision of the committee on publication of the Yale university council.] (New Haven: Yale university press, 1921. 304 p. \$3.50)

In the brief compass of about two hundred and fifty pages Mr. Thompson has compressed the story of some of the most important inventions of the nineteenth century. He describes in turn the contributions made by Franklin, Whitney, Fulton, Slater, Howe, McCormick, Morse, Sholes, Goodyear, Colt, Henry, Edison, Langley, and Wright to the conquest of the forces of nature. Instead of explaining the mechanical principles of the various inventions, he seeks "to outline the personalities of some of the outstanding American inventors and indicate the significance of their achievements." Although he says nothing new, he has distributed with discrimination his appreciations of the services rendered by the various men and has given an interesting narrative of the struggles and successes of the inventors.

To some of the less well-known inventors, such as Obed Hussey, Mr. Thompson gives full credit and he is just in his treatment of Fulton and Whitney. To Morse, on the other hand, he seems to give overmuch credit,

for he does not mention the prior inventions of Cook in England or of Steinheil in Germany, while the successful experiments of Professor Henry at Princeton some five years before Morse's first patent are only alluded to in another chapter.

A few slips were discovered. The flying shuttle of John Kay in 1738 is described as part of the new spinning machinery (page 35). Two Scotchmen are said to have been employed in 1786 to make spinning machines in Massachusetts (page 85); it would have clarified the narrative to have given their names — Alexander and Robert Barr. The principle of standardization is apparently confused with that of interchangeable parts (page 112). The invention of a "horserake" in 1818 is mentioned (page 122), but no mention is made of the tedder, which was the real horserake. In the bibliography of the steam engine (page 249) Mr. Thompson has forgotten to cite W. H. Brown's valuable *History of the first locomotive in America*.

One of the best features of the book, as indeed of the whole series, is the bibliographical notes, which are fresh and helpful.

E. L. BOGART

The influence of George III on the development of the constitution. By A. Mervyn Davies. (Oxford: Oxford university press, 1921. 84 p.)

This little volume — hardly eighty-four pages, inclusive of all appendixes — was given the Stanhope historical essay prize for 1921 in the University of Oxford. It is an endeavor to interweave George III's attempted system of personal government with the democratic movement in England by showing his relations with his ministers, with parliament, and with the electorate. Compared with corresponding works done by undergraduates of our American universities, it must be placed high as a fairly close study of the prevailing influences within the period. As a scholarly piece of work it must take another rating.

Though he admits that "it was a period of climax because it witnessed the culmination and the decline of the system of government by small family groups of great landowners," the author reverts to the whig traditions, to the whig writers, and blandly asserts, "The chief obstacle . . . was the established authority of responsible ministers, upheld by *party connexions*." He suavely writes of "the revival of the Tory party" and the "struggle for power" which "occupied the first ten years of George III's reign," of "the famous Chatham experiment," an "attempt to rout out the *party* system and to establish in its stead, government by *divided, incoherent* administrations." The writer apparently forgets that George III gravely and proudly avowed on his deathbed that he had lived and would die a whig. He forgets that the